

## **The Manitou Springs Fire Forum**

Greetings and welcome to Winter 2004 and the 5<sup>th</sup> installment of the Manitou Springs Fire Forum. Again thanks to Jack Elder and Bruce Schlabaugh for their continued support of city functions, especially our fire department. 2003 saw the Manitou Springs Fire Department respond to 174 fire incidents, 581 medical emergencies and 26 public assists calls. So in keeping with the spirit of this leap year, let's jump right into our activities of the past year.

As you can see from the medical report above we responded to 581 medical emergencies. With the addition of a fourth paramedic in June, we were able to finish out the year providing the highest level of prehospital care over 95% of the time. This year however, we are planning to adjust our staffing or cover paramedic slots so that we can have Advanced Life Support (ALS) 100% of the time or 366 days. We are also planning on maintaining 2 firefighters on duty every day. This will involve hiring a volunteer firefighter for the open shift or bringing one of the paid staff back for an additional shift.

We completed training in two major categories this year. Our firefighters were provided with a 40-hour high-angle certification program. This course was held on Fridays Saturdays and Sundays for two weeks. This course taught repelling, ropes and knots, safety systems and different configurations to manually lift patients uphill with a combinations of ropes and pulleys.

Another major training we completed was a National Wildland Firefighting course, known as a Red Card Certification. This certification is required if and when we are called upon as a resource for a state or federal wildland incident. Along with fulfilling the national requirement, this course also provided us with vital training we would need if and when we are called upon to mitigate a grassland fire in our immediate area. We will continue to offer these courses and certifications and upgrade some this year as well.

We completed the first phase of our personal protective equipment renewal. This is part of our 5-year plan to bring all our fire clothes up to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliance. The first phase entailed the purchase of 13 complete sets of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The second phase will be included in our proposal for the 2005 budget. This then will complete the process whereby we will have total compliance for all our firefighters by June of 2005.

We are still working to find and collect the money to purchase a 12 lead bi-phasic cardiac monitor. We have been using a 3 lead monitor, which does not provide enough views of the heart to properly determine an acute myocardial infarction (AMI). Because of the lack of a proper determination, some state-of-the-art procedures are withheld, per protocol and the patient suffers, both immediately and during the rehabilitation period. As you pass the fire department, take a look at the thermometer affixed to the building. The thermometer is keeping a running total of our progress.

2003 also saw the retirement of George Miller. He gave us 31 years of service. He and his expertise will be sorely missed. He most recently served as an Operations Captain, in which he was responsible for the tactical procedures initiated to mitigate fire and hazardous conditions. Fortunately George was always eager to share his knowledge so we are not completely out in the cold, but it sure was a comfort to have him there in person. Previously he had served as a Deputy Chief, but he thought he would resign that position to spend more personal time with his family, so we immediately appointed him to the Operations Captain. I don't think he knew what hit him. I will miss him. So do you, but you just don't know it yet.

Sincerely signed,

**Ten Hundred**